



Karen S. Spangler
Assistant Editor

Rows of white tombstones on neatly manicured expanses of grass, miniature American flags fluttering in the breeze, the sharp report of 21-gun salutes, melancholy strains of Taps echoing through the air – these poignant visions of Memorial Day observances will be reenacted this holiday at Memorial Day services throughout the nation as America honors her war dead.

The United States has lost thousands of her sons and daughters in wars and conflicts that date back to the Revolutionary War, fought from 1775-1783. There were more than 25,000 casualties of that war, also known as the American War of Independence, as the 13 colonies struggled to win their independence from Great Britain.

Originally called Decoration Day, Memorial Day's official beginning was three years after the Civil War ended on May 5, 1868. The Civil War, which raged from 1861-1865 and divided the North and South, took the lives of more than half a million soldiers. Maj. Gen. John A. Logan, commander-in-chief of an organization of Union veterans called the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), established Decoration Day on May 30, 1868 as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the war dead with flowers. It is believed that he chose that particular date because flowers across the nation would be in bloom.

Logan issued the order, naming it as a day "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country" and "with the hope that it will be kept up from year to year."

In giving the order in 1868 for the graves to be decorated "with the choicest flowers of springtime," Logan urged, "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance...Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic." Logan's words still ring true today.

According to information from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the first large observance of the holiday was held at Arlington National Cemetery.

But even before that, springtime tributes at cemeteries in many parts of the country were a common occurrence. Today, more than two dozen cities and towns in both the north and the south claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day.

The small town of Boalsburg, Pa. in Centre County in the foothills of the Alleghenies lays claim to the honor and a marker by the side of the road boasts: "Boalsburg, An American Village – Birthplace of Memorial Day." As the story goes, it was in October 1864 on a pleas-

ant Sunday afternoon that a teenage girl by the name of Emma Hunter and her friend, Sophie Keller, gathered garden flowers and placed them on the grave of her father, Dr. Reuben Hunter. Dr. Hunter was a surgeon in the Union Army who had been killed in the war.

On the same day, Mrs. Elizabeth Meyer placed flowers on the grave of her son Amos, a private who had fallen on the last day of battle at Gettysburg. The two women, both mourning their recent losses, found a common bond in their shared grief and when they left each other that Sunday, they agreed to meet again on the same day the following year. They planned to honor, not only their loved ones, but others who had no one to visit their graves.

In subsequent years, the informal meeting of the two women turned into a community service and other neighboring communities began to hold similar observances.

Local springtime tributes to the Civil War dead were held in various places. It is believed that one of the first happened April 25, 1877 in Columbus, Miss. As a group of women visited a cemetery to decorate the graves of Confederate soldiers who were killed in the battle of Shiloh, they noticed that the nearby graves of the enemy Union soldiers were neglected. The women were disturbed at the sight of the bare graves and also placed flowers on the graves of the Union soldiers.

But in 1966, Congress and President Lyndon Johnson declared that Waterloo, N.Y. was the "birthplace" of Memorial Day. This was based on reports that local Civil War veterans were honored with a ceremony on May 5, 1866 as businesses closed and the town's residents flew flags at half-staff.

Information from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) notes that by the end of the 19th century, Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. State legislatures passed proclamations designating the day and the Army and Navy adopted regulations for proper observance at their facilities, explained the DVA.

It wasn't until after World War I that the Memorial Day observance was expanded to include all of those who have died in all American wars. Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress enacted in 1971 and also placed on the last Monday in May.

Memorial Day has also been synonymous with "Poppy Day," which had its beginnings in 1915 when Moina Michael was inspired by the poem "Flanders Fields" and responded with her own poem. She conceived the idea of wearing red poppies on Memorial Day to honor those who died serving their country during war. Ms. Michael sold poppies to her friends and co-workers and the money from the sale of the poppies was used to benefit servicemen in need. In 1922, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies.

A Memorial Day tradition that began in the late 1950s is still carried on. More than 1,200 soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They subsequently patrol 24 hours a day during the Memorial Day weekend to ensure that the flag on each grave remains standing.

As Americans gather on this Memorial Day to pay respects to all who have died in our nation's wars, it will be a time to offer tributes and to reflect upon the sacrifices of so many.

The immortal words of nineteenth century American poet Oliver Wendell Holmes embrace all American heroes who have made the supreme sacrifice: "One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, one nation evermore."

For related stories about Memorial Day, read today's Window on Pearl Harbor, "Memorializing Heroes" on page B2 and "USS Arizona Adopt-a-Grave Program" on page B4.

Memorial Day holiday observances

May 29:

•1 p.m. - The Sunday school class of Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Pacific will hold a brief service at the USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island. Some of the members are Ford Island residents.

May 30:

•10 a.m. - World War I Memorial Natatorium, Waikiki (PACFLT Band)

•10 a.m. - Pacific American Foundation Roll Call of Honor, Punchbowl (Navy rifle detail and flag bearer)

•1 p.m. - Boy Scout Good Turn ceremony, Punchbowl (PACFLT Band)

•4 p.m. - Pacific American Foundation, Punchbowl (Navy flag bearer)

•6 p.m. - VFW ceremony at the State Capitol Eternal Flame (Navy flag bearer)

•6 p.m. - Vietnam Veteran candlelight ceremony, Punchbowl (Navy chaplain and flag bearer)

May 31:

•7:30 a.m. - USS Arizona Memorial Visitors Center (Navy flag bearer, Navy rifle detail, PACFLT Band and Navy chaplain)

•8:30 a.m. - Mayor's ceremony, Punchbowl (Navy flag bearer and two escorts)

•1 p.m. - Governor's ceremony, State Veteran's Cemetery (Navy flag bearer)



Photo by PH2 Dennis C. Cantrell

Marine's from "C" Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines render a 21-gun salute for the 53rd annual massing of the color's ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl). A Navy rifle detail and flag bearer will perform at the Pacific American Foundation Roll Call of Honor, Punchbowl Sunday at 4 p.m. and at USS Arizona Memorial Visitors Center Monday at 7:30 a.m.

America's war sacrifices

Throughout America's history, many lives have been lost in wars and conflicts. Some of the major conflicts are listed below:

		Killed	Wounded
1775-1783	Revolutionary War	25,324	8,445
1789	Indian Wars	6,125	3,156
1812-1815	War of 1812	2,260	4,505
1861-1865	Civil War (north)	363,020	281,104
1861-1865	Civil War (south)	199,110	137,102
1898	Spanish-American War	2,893	1,637
1899-1909	Philippines War	4,273	2,840
1914-1918	World War I	116,708	204,003
1941-1945	World War II	408,306	670,846
1950-1953	Korean War	54,246	103,284
1961-1975	Vietnam War	58,219	153,356
1990-1991	Persian Gulf	363	357
(Operation Desert Shield/Storm)			



Photo by PH2 Dennis C. Cantrell


The Pearl Harbor color guard renders a 21-gun salute honoring veterans at the sunset ceremony on the Battleship Missouri.

Commentary

Window on Pearl Harbor

Karen S. Spangler, Assistant Editor

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Memorializing heroes ...

For decades and through numerous wars and conflicts, Americans have paid homage to those who have fallen, to heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country.

It is once again time – that special day set aside to memorialize those gone, but not forgotten.

Ceremonies to honor the war dead will be held here on Oahu and in every town and city in every state of the U.S.A. Flowers and miniature flags will be placed on graves, Taps will be played, and speeches will be made by military and government officials and veterans groups – paying tribute to the thousands of young men and women who, through many years and many wars, have proudly defended our country, who have died to preserve our freedoms.

Added to the honor rolls of fallen heroes are the most recent victims of the ravages of war and the high cost of freedom, the brave Sailors, Marines, Soldiers, Airmen, Coastguardsmen, Reservists and civilians who have lost their lives in the war in Iraq and in the fight against terrorism.

As part of the Memorial Day observances, Americans are encouraged to participate in the “National Moment of Remembrance” for one minute at 3 p.m. (local time) on Memorial Day. A resolution was passed by Congress in December 2000, establishing the “National Moment of Remembrance” to serve as a reminder of the true meaning of Memorial Day. It offers an opportunity to thank veterans and members of the armed forces for their service to our country, to remember the sacrifices of America’s fallen heroes from the Revolutionary War to the present.

The White House Commission on Remembrance, which promotes the spirit of unity and remembrance through observance of the “National Moment of Remembrance,” explains its mission: “To sustain the American spirit through acts of remembrance, not only on Memorial Day, but throughout the year. The commission serves as a banner to encourage Americans of all ages to take a moment every day to reflect on the blessings of our land and to demonstrate our gratitude by giving back to our nation.”

A Memorial Day anthem, “On This Day,” was

written by award-winning composer Charles Strouse expressly for the “National Moment of Remembrance.”

An excerpt of some of the lyrics from the song offers poignant reminders of the significance of Memorial Day:

“The bugle has sounded
Its notes drift away,
This time now belongs to you...

“Think of those, who walked beside us;
Now no longer there.

Then, don't cry, but hear their laughter
For their spirit lives inside,

Make us humble,
Make us knowing,
And reflect on what is done...

On this day
For now, forever
Make this nation one!

On this day,
For all the fallen,
Make this nation one!"

On this Memorial Day, as we honor our American heroes, our hearts will fill with pride. Our strength and hope, our fierce patriotism, and our support of our heroic military personnel will continue to be strong. We thank our military for their dedication to duty, unwavering support and all of the sacrifices that they make. We honor the memories of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. In the words of the White House Commission on Remembrance, “Remember the sacrifices. Remember the gift.”

May God bless America.

To learn more about Memorial Day observances planned on Oahu and to view a Memorial Day tribute, see B1 in today's edition of Hawai'i Navy News. For more information about the National Moment of Remembrance and to hear the song, “On This Day,” visit the White House Commission on Remembrance Web site at www.remember.gov.

Have a fine Navy day!

Great Life Hawai'i photo of the week



Photo of GM1 (SW) Eric Wreed and his wife Dana who visited an old lava flow on the Big Island. Morale, Welfare and Recreation is offering the “Great Life Hawai'i Photo Contest,” so dust off the photo albums and pick the photo that best represents what makes being stationed in Hawai'i so memorable. Submit unpublished photographs (no smaller than five by seven inches at 200 DPI) to “hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com.” All photographs submitted will become the property of HNN and MWR, which reserves the right to edit, copyright and publish submissions. There is no entry fee, but there is a limit of one entry per family. Weekly photo winners will be showcased both in Hawai'i Navy News and on the MWR web site “www.greatlifehawaii.com.” Every quarter, a winner will be selected from the weekly winners to receive a special gift package from MWR. This contest is open to amateur photographers only, who must be at least 18 years of age.

Click it or ticket

JO2 Devin Wright
Staff Writer

Navy Region Hawai'i kicked off this year's Click it or Ticket Campaign May 24 to emphasize the importance of seat belt safety.

During the campaign, law enforcement officials at Pearl Harbor, in Hawai'i and across the nation are taking greater action toward seat belt safety through television ads, stiffer fines and possibly a suspended driver's license. Statistics have shown that using seat belts saves lives.

“If you get caught without your seat belt in the state of Hawai'i, you could get fined up to \$77 or depending on the circumstances, have your license taken. The obvious repercussion is if you get into an accident, you could be killed,” said Capt. Kenneth Price of Navy Region Hawai'i security department.

The campaign is geared toward a specific high traffic accident time frame.

“Traffic accidents start to increase with holidays coming up so we need to get the message out that people need to wear their seat belts for their own safety,” said Price. “This campaign is important to the region because safety of our personnel is priority number one. It concerns us all,” Price emphasized.

Although signs are posted throughout Naval Station Pearl Harbor, the policy goes beyond the gates of the base.

“These rules aren't just the policy of Navy Region Hawai'i,” said Price. “Hawai'i law states that seat belts must be worn 100 percent of the time.”

Master at Arms Seaman Anne Karcher of Navy Region Security Pearl Harbor said people try and drive on base without wearing their seat belts “all the time.”

“It's kind of hard to give citations with the flow of traffic through these gates, so we just make sure they are squared away when they drive on base,” said Karcher. “That's important



U.S. Navy photo by JO2 Devin Wright
MASN Anne Karcher of Navy Region Hawai'i Security Department Pearl Harbor waves a motorist through Nimitz Gate after informing her of the Click it or Ticket campaign. The campaign is geared toward raising seat belt awareness.

because seat belts save lives.”

Many motorists have already felt the sting of the campaign.

“I definitely have heard of the Click it or Ticket campaign. I got a ticket recently for my passenger not wearing their seat belt,” said Damage Control Petty Officer 3rd Class Kent Crouch of Naval Station Pearl Harbor. “I knew better because there were signs everywhere and I also saw a lot of commercials. It ended up costing me about \$80. So I won't be doing that again.”

Although the campaign ends June 6, law enforcement officials stress the importance of wearing seat belts when operating or riding in motor vehicles year round.

For more information on the Click it or Ticket campaign, contact Navy Region Hawai'i security department at 474-6751.

Talk radio to air Memorial Day tribute

Karen S. Spangler
Assistant Editor

A Memorial Day tribute will be presented from 8-9 a.m. today on KHNR's live talk show “Flashpoint Hawai'i” aired on 650 AM. Callers are invited to call the program to memorialize and pay tribute to family members and friends who have lost their lives in any war in which Americans have fought. Veterans who have personal stories or testimonies to share are also encouraged to call. Radio listeners should call 524-6565.

General Hank Stackpole will be a featured guest for the program. Stackpole retired following a 36-year career in the Marine Corp and is currently the president of the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Hawai'i.

“We want to express our support for the military, the fight against terrorism and allow local people to hear more positive information,” said Debrah Lauer, co-host for Flashpoint Hawai'i.

The show is co-hosted by Lauer and Dr. George Rhoades.

According to Lauer, FlashPoint Hawai'i focuses on “local” news and how national and international events affect residents of the aloha state. She explained that featured guests express their views and opinions on current issues that affect us all, especially here in Hawaii. Both sides of the issues are presented.

Flashpoint Hawai'i airs from 8-9 a.m. every Friday, following the Bill O'Reilly Radio Factor show.

Navy Exchanges offer record savings

Kristine M. Sturkie

Navy Exchange Service Command Public Affairs

Sailors shopping in the Navy Exchange are saving more money today than ever before.

The Navy Exchange Service Command's (NEXCOM) most recent independent survey, conducted by QRS Corporation, concluded that customers save an average of 20.7 percent, not including sales tax.

"This latest survey of nearly 21 percent savings is a record high for the Navy Exchange," said Rear Adm. Robert E. Cowley III, commander, Navy Exchange Service Command. "When you add in the average sales tax savings, customers save around 27 percent. That puts real purchasing power and money back into the pockets of our customers."

The research firm shopped for a variety of products in eight regions throughout the United States. The savings found in each re-

gion were Bethesda, Md. - 20.29 percent; Everett, Wash. - 21.38 percent; Great Lakes, Ill. - 19.38 percent; Jacksonville, Fla.- 19.27 percent; Norfolk, Va. - 20.68 percent; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii - 24.83 percent; Pensacola, Fla. - 19.11 percent and San Diego - 21.25 percent. Navy Exchange prices on more than 350 items were compared to those of major retailers like Wal-Mart, Circuit City, Target, Home Depot, Dillards, Sears and Office Max.

The same items were surveyed from region to region and included items such as major appliances, consumer electronics, furniture, clothing, housewares, sporting goods, jewelry, and lawn and garden. The different stores shopped for the comparison were categorized as discount stores, mass merchants, full-line department stores and category-killer stores.

In each of the 34 different departments shopped throughout the store, Navy Exchange saved customers money. In boys' clothing, the savings are 39.65 percent; in girls' clothing, the savings are 32.24 percent;

in home furnishings, the savings are 20.71 percent; in housewares, the savings are 22.02 percent; in intimate apparel, the savings are 27.83 percent; in sporting goods, the savings are 20.41 percent; and in infants, the savings are 17.06 percent. The savings don't end with just merchandise.

"In addition to providing an average savings of 20.7 percent, we also contribute to our customers' quality of life," said Cowley. "In 2003, that amounted to over \$300 million at the point of purchase and resulted in a combined contribution of \$69 million to MWR [Morale, Welfare and Recreation] when we include Ship's Stores. We also created programs, such as our A-OK Student Reward Program, Military Star Card and the NEX Military Moving Center, specifically to help our military customers. These are things our customers won't find in civilian stores."

For related news, visit the Navy Exchange Service Command Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/nexcom.



U.S. Navy photo by JOSN Ryan C. McGinley

Connie Sweat, Air Force mother, shops for savings at the Navy Exchange. Customers who shop at the exchange save an average of 20 percent compared to civilian businesses, according to a recent survey by QRS Corporation. The percentage is a record high for the exchange and increases to 27 percent when sales tax is added.

Navy medicine pushes local cataract awareness

Aveline V. Allen

Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

If your vision is not clear, it may be the first sign of a possible cataract. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), cataracts are the leading cause of blindness worldwide, and one of the most common conditions among Americans over age 60.

"Cataracts are usually a normal part of aging," said Capt. Steven S. Kerrick, ophthalmologist, National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), Bethesda, Md. "Cataracts almost never cause injury to the eye, so the timing for when they need to be surgically removed depends upon the patient's symptoms. Once patients find it becomes difficult to drive, read or do other normal activities, it is reasonable to consider cataract surgery."

Cataracts develop when the natural lens of the eye, the part of the eye responsible for focusing light and producing sharp images, becomes cloudy and hardens. The outcome is the loss of visual function.

The cause of cataracts is unknown. Some may be triggered by a prior eye injury. Other risk factors include smoking, diabetes, alcohol use and possible exposure to sunlight.

Symptoms associated with cataracts include cloudy, fuzzy or filmy vision; changes in color perception; frequent changes in eyeglass prescription; impaired night vision, especially while driving; halos around lights; double vision and a white or cloudy spot in the lens of the eye where the pupil appears milky or white.

An ophthalmologist will review your symptoms, perform a regular eye exam, and test for glare disability and contrast sensitivity in order to make a positive diagnosis, according to the American Society for Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS).

According to the AAO, cataracts can usually be treated and vision restored. The current treatment for cataracts involves surgical re-

moval of the cloudy lens, which is replaced with a prosthetic lens (intraocular lens).

Kerrick said there are two common questions patients ask about cataract surgery: Is the cataract removed with a laser? And will the implant wear out and need to be replaced?

"The answer to both questions is no. First, lasers are not used to remove cataracts," said Kerrick. "Lasers are used to perform many different types of eye surgery, but not the removal of cataracts. Also, once the implant is placed in the eye, it generally can remain in the eye permanently and does not 'wear out.' However, months or years after the cataract is removed, a thin membrane may develop behind the implant that needs to be opened with a laser procedure. This procedure takes just a few minutes and is done in the office. The procedure is quite common and may be one reason why many patients mistakenly believe that cataracts are removed with a laser."

Statistics show that cataract surgery is a highly successful procedure. According to the AAO, approximately 90 percent of patients reported improvement in vision after surgery.

"As with any surgery, there is always a possibility of complications," added Kerrick. "Your ophthalmologist will be able to discuss these issues during the pre-operative evaluation, and help you decide when your symptoms are significant enough to balance the likelihood of improved vision against any potential risk from the surgery."

Great strides are continually being made in cataract surgery, with new and innovative ways for cataract surgeons to treat larger numbers of patients, ensuring the highest level quality patient care is delivered.

"Many of the most appreciative and satisfied patients in my practice are my cataract surgery patients," commented Kerrick. "They are often amazed at how much better they see once their cataracts are removed."

“Many of the most appreciative and satisfied patients in my practice are my cataract surgery patients ...”

Capt. Steven S. Kerrick
Ophthalmologist

Navy One Source gives 24-hour support service

JOSN Ryan C. McGinley

Staff writer

Sharkey Theater held an informational brief Monday and Wednesday highlighting a

new Navy program, Navy One Source, which augments Fleet and Family Support Center services. The new program allows Sailors and family members to receive assistance and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We're not the one source of support, we're just one piece of the puzzle that fits with all the other support that's already provided," said Catherine Reynolds, Navy One Source program manager.

Navy One Source is a program designed to complement FFSC, ombudsman and other quality of life services via telephone and email. The program aims to answer questions about education, finance, relationships, preparing for deployment and many other topics using consultants and researchers.

"Any kind of problem that you can bring to the consultant, we have an expert that will

be able to work with you on it," said Reynolds.

The service, which is completely funded by the Department of Defense and bears no cost to the user, provides master's degree qualified, personalized support to active duty, reservists and family members.

The call is completely anonymous to those who wish it; however, users will complete a demographic survey for statistical purposes. Laws require consultants to report information to authorities regarding domestic abuse or threat of harm to yourself or others.

People can contact Navy One Source via the telephone at 1-800-540-1233 or on the web at www.navyonesource.com. When logging onto the web site, the user identification is 'Navy' and the password is 'Sailor'. The program has simultaneous translation in over 140 languages and is compatible with handicap needs for the hearing impaired. The interactive web site includes pan-a-call, email a consultant, live events, monitored bulletin boards and topical newsletters.

"We're available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day," said Reynolds. "You can talk to someone at any time of the day. It doesn't matter if it's Christmas Day, we're there."

Augments Fleet and Family Support Center services. We're here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The service is at no cost to you, and is confidential.

All calls answered live.

From the United States:
1-800-540-4123

From outside the United States ONLY:
800-540-4123

Or collect from outside the United States:
1-484-530-5914

TTY/TDD: 1-800-346-9188

In español, llame al: 1-877-989-5392

Simultaneous translation
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www.navyonesource.com
user ID: Navy
password: Sailor

Low vision accessible

Correction

In the article "Hawaii bike club can offer open roads and fun," Dangerous Curves Hawaii was erroneously described as a club instead of as a group. They are not an official motorcycle club. Michelle Carrasca was also misquoted as saying, "Experience, training, and attitude all factor into a motorcycle club like Dangerous Curves Hawai'i's decision to allow someone to become an official patched member."

Navy MWR joins up with Marine Corps, Army to offer Hawaiian vacation tour



Beachgoers enjoy the view of Diamond Head and downtown Honolulu from the beach. MWR is offering a Hawaiian vacation tour, including a beach party and games on Waikiki island.

Robin Hillyer Miles
MWR Communications Group

Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) announced in May the creation of a new Hawaiian vacation tour, produced in conjunction with the Army and Marine Corps.

MWR's Information, Tickets and Travel (ITT) office is now offering a five day-four night Joint Services Hawaii Aloha Tour, Sept. 16-20.

"We received numerous inquiries about Hawaii tours at a recent conference, so the Joint Services decided to create this opportunity," said Karen Fritz, Navy MWR ITT/Leisure Travel manager. "Our MWR professionals in each of the services have a vast knowledge of the tourism industry on the islands and have teamed together to produce an outstanding package," she said.

Open to qualified MWR participants, this combined effort is the first of its kind and will showcase historical and recreational activities within the Aloha State.

The itinerary includes a "Hawaiian Beach Party" limousine tour where participants ride canoes, take a boogie board lesson, kayak in a glass boat, snorkel and play beach games.

The beach party tour concludes with an authentic Hawaiian barbecue lunch, followed by a Ho'olaulea (Hawaiian block party) on Waikiki island.

On the next morning, participants will visit the "Polynesian Cultural Center," featuring a celebration of the ancient tradition of Hawaiian royalty.

They will end the day with a luau feast with entertainment from old and new Hawaii. Also included in

the tour is a narrated 40-mile tour of Pearl Harbor and Honolulu.

The Joint Services Hawaiian Tour is available for \$729 per person, based on double occupancy.

Travel dates are Sept. 16 to Sept. 20, with departure from Los Angeles.

Round-trip airfare from Los Angeles, four night's accommodations in a Waikiki hotel, airport transfers, and three days of activities are included in the package.

Reservations are limited to a total passenger count of 50 participants. Deadline for registration and payment is July 12.

Customers may visit their local MWR ITT office or www.greatlife-hawaii.com/aloha for more details.

For related news, visit the Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/navymwr.

Transition Assistance Programs outline best employment options

Fleet and Family Support Center

Some people say that military life isn't easy. Deciding to leave the military isn't easy either. Did you know that younger veterans (age 20-24) experience a higher unemployment rate than their non-veteran counterparts? If this is shocking news, consider the fact that older veterans (age 40+) make up 56.2 percent of all the unemployed veterans across America. The Navy Transition Assistance Program can help chart a course for the future and to discover all of your employment options.

Think of transition as a journey. You will need a roadmap to assist you in your travels. Think of your destination as simply a career goal. Landmarks serve as obstacles, challenges and rewards. In preparing for change during your career, you choose the best route and select the landmarks that will be important to you. So why do Sailors devote more time to planning family vacations than on career planning strategies?

Changing careers is a stressful undertaking, perhaps even moreso for those leaving military service after many years. For example, a doctor goes to school for eight years and carries the title for the rest of his or her life. A service mem-

ber, however, may have worked for 30 years to achieve a rank or grade, but upon leaving the armed forces, he or she leaves this rank behind - and with it - a large portion of his or her identity.

Some people easily find new identities; others may never find them. Still others may feel that they will never find them. Transition is traumatic and stressful, but it also opens up a whole range of possibilities. If you approach your transition as an opportunity to grow, you will have already taken a giant step toward re-establishing your identity.

The Navy's Transition Assistance Program offers a "full service" approach of developing strategies to effectively manage career change and discovering all employment opportunities. During the past several years, over 27,000 Sailors attended transition workshops and seminars more than 90 days prior to separation. Twenty-six percent discovered their best employment option was with their current employer - the United States Navy. That's a total of 7,050 Sailors opting for retention. Our workshops continue making a significant impact on retention. After all, 7,050 Sailors can't all be wrong.

Adopt-a-grave gives victims year-round remembrance

Karen S.Spangler
Assistant Editor

Adopt-a-Grave, a program established by Lorraine Marks-Haislip - USS Arizona historian - provides a special opportunity to remember the heroes of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack at Pearl Harbor.

Haislip conceived the idea as a way to pay tribute to the victims of the attack and is committed to the idea of "year round remembrance" for the victims.

She noted that by adopting a grave, donors can ensure that the men are remembered on patriotic holidays, as well as at other times of the year.

Those who are interested in adopting a gravestone can choose a specific grave that

they would like to adopt and make arrangements with the florist on the Web site or choose their own florist.

The unidentified victims of the Pearl Harbor attack interred at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) on Oahu include 124 Sailors from USS Arizona (BB 39), 381 from USS Oklahoma (BB 37), 33 from USS West Virginia (BB 48), 22 from USS California (BB 44), 14 from USS Utah (31), two from USS Nevada (BB 36) and one from USS Curtis (AV 4).

Many of the gravesites represent multiple sets of remains.

To adopt a grave or for more information, visit the USS Arizona historical web site at www.ussarizona-facts.us.



Photo courtesy of The National Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) The Statue of Columbia (shown above) is located in the center of the National Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) on Oahu, Hawai'i. For more information visit the web site at www.ussarizonafacts.us.

C M Y K S

Movie Call

Sharkey Theater, Pearl Harbor
(473-0726)

FRIDAY
7:00 p.m. Passion of the Christ (R)
SATURDAY
2:30 p.m. Home on The Range (PG)
4:30 p.m. Johnson Family Vacation (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. Hellboy (R)
SUNDAY
2:30 p.m. The Prince and Me (PG)
4:30 p.m. Jersey Girl (PG 13)
6:45 p.m. Johnson Family Vacation (PG 13)
THURSDAY
7:00 p.m. Walking Tall (PG-13)

\$3 adults; \$1.50 children (6-11)
*Special: \$2 adults; \$1 children (6 -11)

Memorial Theater, Hickam AFB
(449-2239)

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
7:00 p.m. Hellboy (PG-13)
SUNDAY
7:00 p.m. Walking Tall (PG-13)
WEDNESDAY
7:00 p.m. Walking Tall (PG-13)
THURSDAY
7:00 p.m. The Girl Next Door (R)

\$3 adults; \$1.50 children (6-11)
*Special: \$2 adults; \$1 children (6 -11)

Sgt. Smith Theater, Schofield Barracks
(624-2585)

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
7:00 p.m. The Alamo (PG-13)
SUNDAY
2:00 p.m. Home on the Range (PG)
WEDNESDAY
7:00 p.m. The Whole Ten Yards (PG-13)
THURSDAY
7:00 p.m. Home on the Range (PG)

\$3 adults; \$1.50 children (6-11)
*Special: \$2 adults; \$1 children (6 -11)

Editor's note: Every effort has been made to provide the most up-to-date information at the time of publication. However, scheduling of these events is subject to change. It is recommended that you call the contact numbers for the individual events to determine whether or not the activity will be held.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE EVENTS

June 2: Basic Bicycle Repair Workshop, 6 p.m. The cost is \$5. Deadline to register is May 31.

June 5: Alpine Tower open house, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. There is no cost. Call for more details.

June 6: Introduction to surf kayaking, 9:30 a.m. The cost is \$15. Deadline to register is June 2.

June 9: Pig hunting workshop, 6 p.m. The cost is \$5. Deadline to register is June 7.
For more information, call 473-1198.

T.G.I.F. - OCEAN'S CPO CLUB

Get together to enjoy pupus, entertainment and swap sea stories at T.G.I.F. today at Ocean's CPO Club. There will be free pupus starting at 4 p.m. and a DJ will spin the latest tunes from 5-8 p.m. The club is open to enlisted personnel E-7 -E-9. For more information, call 473-1743.

"BREAK INTO SUMMER" SKATEBOARD CONTEST

Boards & Blades Skate Shop will host a "Break into Summer" skateboard contest on May 29. Divisions will include open military (active duty) and age categories for age 18, age 14-17, and age 13 and under. The cost is \$7 per person. The registration fee is \$10. For more information, call 473-0610.

JUNIOR GOLF SUMMER PROGRAM

A junior golf summer program will

convene from 4:30-6 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays from May 29-June 27 at Navy Marine Golf Course. The program is open to youth ages eight to 17. For more information, call Simon at 474-6838.

MEMORIAL DAY TOURNAMENTS

Basketball and softball Memorial Day holiday tournaments will be held May 28-30 at Pearl Harbor. The tournaments are open to active duty teams from Pearl Harbor, NCTAMS, Barber's Point, West Loch and Kunia. The entry fee is \$175 per team. To sign up or for more information, call the MWR athletics office at 473-2437 or 473-2494.

MEMORIAL DAY COSMIC BOWLING SPECIAL

Naval Station Bowling Center will offer a Memorial Day cosmic bowling special on May 31. The cost is \$1.75 per game for military and family members and \$2 per game for DoD patrons. For more information, call 473-2574.

INTRAMURAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

An intramural golf tournament will be held June 2-4 at Navy-Marine Golf Course. The tournament is open to active duty service members from Pearl Harbor, NCTAMS, Barber's Point, West Loch and Kunia. Tee times are available from 7:10 am. Registration is free. For more information, call 473-2437.

FUN TIME REVUE

A fun time revue for keiki of all ages will begin at 4 p.m. June 4 at Sharkey Theater. There will be performances by Let's Pretend Circus with Becky & Elisa, Magic by Adam the Great and twisted fun by Cosmo the Balloon Wizard. The event is open to authorized MWR patrons and guests. For more information, call 473-0606.

MASSAGES BY "THE LOTUS TOUCH"

Want to improve circulation, increase flexibility, release muscle tension and receive a greater sense of well-being? "The Lotus Touch" will offer massage specials throughout the month of May. Patrons can enjoy a hot and cold stone massage which includes face, neck and shoulders. Reconnect with Mother Earth by becoming balanced, centered and cradled by nature's elements. A 75-minute treatment costs \$90. Other treatments are available for as low as \$15. Appointments are available at Bloch Arena and Power Point Fitness Centers. For more information, call Ruby at 386-4812.

LEISURE TRAVEL / TLA TRAVEL

Planning a trip? Travel Connections, the new travel office located in Bloch Arena, can assist with worldwide airline ticketing, hotel accommodations, vacation packages and on-island TLA. For TLA, the travel office will arrange accommodations in one of a host of on-island hotels that offer lodging to fit many needs - all priced within TLA allowances. Those who book TLA through Travel Connections travel office will have the use of a free rental car during their TLA stay. Stop by throughout the month of March and enter the raffle for a DVD player. There is no cost to enter and you need not be present to win. The winning ticket will be drawn March 31. For more information, call 422-0139.

FFSC

For more on activities at the Fleet and Family Support Center, call 473-4222.

GRIEF RECOVERY WORKSHOP

An eight-week Grief Recovery Workshop will be held from 5-7 p.m. beginning June 2. This eight-week workshop will provide a safe and structured environment in which participants can examine their beliefs about loss, and resolve their loss issues - to move beyond grief to a richer quality of life.

EMPLOYMENT IN HAWAII'S SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SEAP)

A workshop, Employment in Hawai'i offered through the Spouse Employment Assistance Program (SEAP), is scheduled for 8:30-10:30 a.m. June 3. The SEAP counselor will provide employment assistance to eligible clients in a group session, including information on the Hawai'i job market, job search tips, and job search resources, such as access to the JEMS Job Bank.

MANAGING MONEY AND CREDIT

A class, Managing Money and Credit, will be offered from 1-2:30 p.m. June 3. Learn the basic skills and techniques of managing your money and budgeting, what you should be aware of with credit cards, and loans and planning savings goals.



Weekly events:

Sunday: Chess tournament, 6:30 p.m.
Monday: WWE wrestling, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 8-Ball tournament - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Game show - 6:30 p.m.
Thursday: 9-Ball Pool tournament - 7 p.m.

Community Calendar



The Alamo: In the spring of 1836, 200 Texans- men of all races who believed in the future of Texas- held the fort for 13 days under siege by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

The Girl Next Door: Matthew is a straight-arrow over-achiever who has never really lived life, until he falls for his new neighbor and discovers this perfect "girl next door" is a one-time porn star.

Hellboy: In the final days of World War II, the Nazis attempt to use black magic to aid their dying cause. The Allies raid the camp but not before a demon - Hellboy - has already been conjured.

Home on the Range: A young widow is in danger of her farm being foreclosed unless she can come up with \$1,000 for the mortgage. The farm animals come up with a plan to get the money.

Jersey Girl: Ollie is a powerful entertainment executive whose wife dies in childbirth. Ollie, tasked with raising a child by himself, moves back in with his father.

Johnson Family Vacation:
See review

The Passion of the Christ: Over the last 12 hours of Christ's life, he is betrayed by Judas Iscariot and is condemned to death for blasphemy. Jesus is severely beaten and made to carry his cross up to Golgotha.

The Prince & Me: Paige is on the fast track toward her goal. Edward, the Prince of Denmark, poses as a college student. Paige has to choose between becoming a princess or a doctor.

Walking Tall: After returning from serving his country overseas, Chris finds his high school rival has infested his hometown with drugs and crime. Chris gets elected sheriff and shuts down the operations.

The Whole Ten Yards: The movie follows the wacky misadventures of a hitman who lives next door to a mild-mannered dentist following the events of "The Whole Nine Yards."

JOSN Ryan C. McGinley

Johnson Family Vacation

Cedric the Entertainer can produce some hilariously paradoxical characters with some less than beneficial scripts. However, "Johnson Family Vacation" provides almost nothing with which the gifted comedian can work.

The film follows the same formula and generic ideas of other 'road trip' movies such as "National Lampoon's Summer Vacation." Nate (Cedric the Entertainer) lives with his son (Bow Wow) in a separate house from Nate's wife (Vanessa L. Williams) and two daughters (Solange Knowles and Gabby Soleil) because of a marriage that is on the rocks. They agree to take a trip to Missouri together for a reunion and the benefit of their youngest daughter's birthday. What predictably comes is one big montage of mishaps and accidents, which produces few funny moments and an abundance of tiring comedy.

For example, Nate receives a 'pimped' out Lincoln Navigator before the trip, accidentally, and agrees to take the car for a few days on the trip with the promise of returning it in the same condition. The car shockingly doesn't make the trip without many tiresome gags (dents, scratches, concrete, etc.) that are inevitable and simply not funny.

The movie does produce 'some' prosperous moments; however, using a lackluster cast such as Bow Wow (the pre-pubescent rapper) and Solange Knowles (Beyonce's less-than-talented sister) provides little stability or rhythm to an already tedious script from Todd R. Jones and Earl Richey Jones.

The recycling of plot lines is a certainty in Hollywood, but making the film work requires an unusual twist or renovation that somewhat surprises the audience. "Johnson Family Vacation" fails to capture uniqueness or an audience and leaves Cedric the Entertainer less than entertaining, and almost begging for a laugh.

OVERALL RATING: ⬆️⬆️⬆️⬆️⬆️

Here's a look at off-duty events happening on Oahu's military bases for service members and their families.

To get your activity or event featured in the Community Calendar, e-mail your requests to the editor at hnn@honolulu-advertiser.com or fax submissions to Hawai'i Navy News at 473-2876.

Deadline for submissions is Thursday for the following week's issue. Items will run for four consecutive weeks on a space available basis.

MISCELLANEOUS

TSUNAMI SWIM TEAM

The Pearl Harbor Aquatics Tsunami is a competitive swim team that practices daily at Richardson Pool. It is open to both military and civilian swimmers ages six years and up. The team is a USA swimming affiliate. For more information, visit the team's Web site at www.tsunamis.homestead.com or contact at 471-9181 or email: phsc@inix.com.

CALLING KAYAK PADDLERS

Kayak paddlers are invited to join paddler Donna Kahaku'i of Kai Makana (ocean education through action) on a 200-mile World Ocean Day Awareness Paddle as she transits from Haleiwa, Oahu to Kauai and finishes at Kaula Rock on Niihau. She will start her trip on June 2 and plans to arrive at Kaula on June 5. June 8 will be celebrated as Ocean Awareness Day. For more information, call Donna at 282-8012 or email at kaimakana1@hawaii.rr.com or visit the Web site at www.kaimakana.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR VGAL PROGRAM

Volunteers are needed to serve as volunteer guardian ad litem (VGALs) for Hawai'i's First Judicial family court. VGALs serve as advocates for

abused and neglected children who are in the family court system. Free training is provided. Volunteers must enjoy working with children and be able to confront difficult issues. For more information, call the VGAL program office at 538-5930.

SHIP/SUBMARINE OHANA

USS CROMMELIN FSG MEETING

The USS Crommelin Family Support Group (FSG) meeting will meet at 6:30 p.m. June 2 at the Hale Moku Community Center. Childcare will be provided at a cost of a \$1 per child. For more information, contact the FSG Board at crommelinfsg@yahoo.com or Melanie at 456-1725.

NEX

ICY TREATS

Island Scoops, the newest addition to the Navy Exchange food court is now open. The eatery features everything from ice cream to smoothies, Halo Halo to ices, you're sure to find something sweet for everyone in the family. Open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Pump Up the Volume

Proud of your auto sound system? Enter the Navy Exchange Auto Sound Center Sound Off Competition for a chance to win prizes. Contestants will compete at the NEX/MWR Auto Show on June 26 and will be judged on loudness, clarity and cosmetics. To enter, contact Mike Griffin at 421-1650 by June 21. The competition is open to members of the military community only.

TENNIS ANYONE?

Tennis players can receive 20 percent off their first private lesson at Wentworth

Pro Shop and \$5 off their first tennis racquet restringing when they purchase a tennis racquet from the Navy Exchange. For more information, stop by the Navy Exchange sporting goods department or call Wentworth Pro Shop at 473-0610.

SHOP AT FORD ISLAND

Ford Island Mini Mart offers residents of Navy housing on the island convenient shopping without leaving Ford Island.

GOOD GRADES

Parents can bring their child's most recent report card to the Navy Exchange to register for the A-OK Program. Entrants could win up to \$5,000 in U.S. Savings Bonds. For more information, see a customer service representative at The Mall rotunda.

NAVY LODGE

Navy Lodge Ford Island offers 150 affordable, comfortable, air-conditioned suites and rooms. Amenities include a swimming pool, a large meeting room, mini mart and a landscaped courtyard. Each room features satellite TV, DVD/CD player, direct-dial telephone service and a kitchenette, complete with microwave and utensils. To make reservations or for more information, call 440-2290.

MAY IS MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

The Navy Exchange will offer special thank-yous to members of the military community throughout the month of May. Receive a free gift with any Sunny Hawai'i purchase of \$40 or more, while supplies last. Pamper yourself with tropical island scents. Receive 15 percent off all Forever Florals fragrances and enter to win a gift basket from the Forever Florals fragrance collection.

ARMED SERVICES YMCA

ALIAMANU LOCATION:

The Aliamanu (AMR) branch of the Armed Services YMCA is located at 1875 Aliamanu Drive, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96818. The phone number is 833-1185, fax 834-3631, email is ASYMCAAMR@aol.com . Hours are 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

T.O.P.S.

T.O.P.S. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), a nonprofit, noncommercial weight-loss support group, meets every Wednesday at the Armed Services YMCA, Aliamanu location. Weigh-in begins at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 6:15 p.m. Membership fees are low and includes the T.O.P.S. magazine. There are also incentive programs offered. The first meeting is free. For more information, call Delcie at 623-1403.

WELCOME BABY

All expectant and new moms are invited to attend the Welcome Baby support group which meets twice a month. Children are welcome to attend. For more information or to reserve a spot, call Terri or Susan at 363-1897.

CHILDREN'S WAITING ROOM

The Children's Waiting Room is a place where parents can drop off their children if they have a doctor's appointment. The Armed Services YMCA is in need of volunteers to keep this program running at Tripler Army Medical Center. The hours of the waiting room are from 8 a.m.-noon Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Those who are interested in volunteering or who wish to place an appointment should call 833-1185

STORY IDEAS?

Phone: (808) 473-2888
Email: hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com

Contact the HNN editor for guidelines and story/photo submission requirements

Hawai'i
Navy News

Parents are important teachers in Red Cross aquatics programs

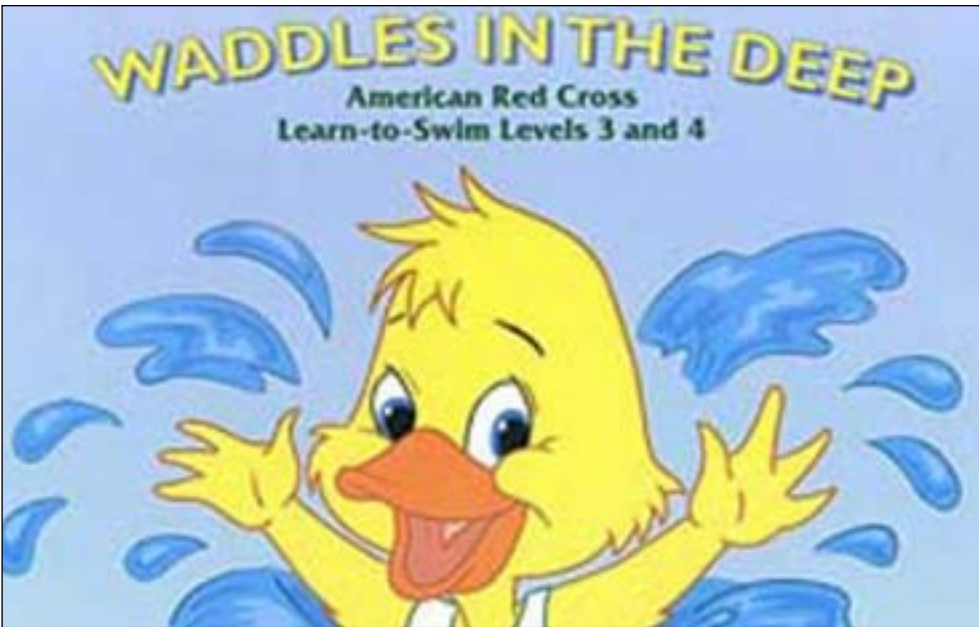
Lesly Hallman

American Red Cross

Splashing in a swimming pool to keep cool in a hot summer is something every kid looks forward to, and as summer approaches the American Red Cross encourages parents to take the lead when looking for and enrolling children in swimming programs this summer.

The Red Cross, the leader in swimming and life guarding education since 1914, knows that parents play a major role in the safety and success of their children as they learn to swim. The Parent and Child Aquatics program targets families with children ages six months to five years. The program shows parents the right way to hold their kids in the water, while increasing their comfort level at the same time.

"Parents can really play an important role in their child's aquatic advancement," said Scott Conner, Red Cross vice president for preparedness. "The American Red Cross believes the number one



thing they can do to keep their families safe in and around the water is the make sure that everyone learns to swim and learns to swim well."

The program includes six steps that provide a comprehensive introduction to water skills that children and parents will both enjoy. Parents also receive full

color illustrated booklets, "Raffy Learns to Swim" and "Waddles In the Deep," that they can use away from the pool to continue reinforcing the swimming skills and safety lessons their children are learning. The booklets have suggested games, for example, like blowing bubbles to learn breath control.

- Level 1—Introduction to Water Skills, which helps students feel comfortable in the water, learn to float, and learn to exhale underwater.
- Level 2—Fundamental Aquatic Skills, including how to dive from a kneeling position and treading water.
- Level 3—Stroke Development, learning how to swim with a front and a back crawl and perform a survival float.
- Level 4—Stroke Improvement, including how to swim the butterfly and learning safety diving rules
- Level 5—Stroke Refinement, learning the sidestroke, breaststroke and elementary backstroke.
- Level 6—Swimming and Skill Profi-

ciency, which refines all strokes so students can swim with ease.

At every point, additional safety elements are included in the instruction so that kids remain safe even when they embark on swimming without a parent in the pool with them.

"Becoming a swimmer takes time, and even then no one is drown-proof," said Mike Espino, aquatics expert for the Red Cross. "Once able to perform basic skills without parents, kids are ready to move to the learn-to-swim program."

There are several steps parents can take when looking for a swimming program for their young child:

- Make safety number one
- Have reasonable expectations
- Practice makes perfect
- Have fun.

For more information on enrolling your child in swimming lessons, contact the American Red Cross Hawaii State Chapter at 734-2101 or visit red-crosshawaii@hawaii.rr.com.

Forest City names senior vice-president for U.S. Navy housing partnership

Becker Communications

Thad E. Bond has been named senior vice-president for Hawai'i Military Communities (HMC) LLC, the partnership between Forest City Enterprises and C.F. Jordan, which will manage and redevelop five U.S. Navy housing communities on Oahu.

Bond was also named vice-president of Forest City Hawai'i, Inc., which is the managing partner of Hawai'i Military Communities. He will oversee the projects that will create new neighborhoods within existing communities at McGrew Point, Hokulani, Halsey Terrace, Moanalua Terrace and Radford Terrace.

"It gives me great personal satisfaction to know that we're contributing to the well-being of these families while their husbands and wives do what they must to secure our freedoms," said Bond.

Bond will guide the initial development phase which includes the construction of 910 new homes and the renovation of 1,040 others. Plans call for creating new roads, neighborhood and community centers, green and open spaces, recreational facilities and other amenities.

"The names will remain the same, but the places will become new communities in every sense," according to Bond. "They will be safe and attractive homes in modern neighborhoods with the finest facilities – in short, ex-

actly what Hawai'i's families deserve," Bond said.

Bond was previously director of development and senior project manager for Hualalai Development Company on the Big Island of Hawai'i. For more than 18 years, he has been involved in management of Hawai'i projects ranging from resorts, to office towers, to entire communities.

"We are so fortunate to be able to attract a manager of Thad's caliber to this project," said Tom Henneberry, Forest City Washington chief operating officer. "Not only is he a top-notch professional, his Hawai'i roots will help make certain that island issues and sensitivities are respected and considered every step of the way," noted Henneberry.

In addition to all planning, financing, construction and renovations, HMC will provide 50 years of service through ongoing operations and maintenance of the properties and residential communities. In addition to Bond, HMC has hired more than 20 locally-based firms to assist in the project.

In September 2003, Hawai'i Military Communities, a partnership of Forest City Enterprises, Inc. and C.F. Jordan LP, was selected to redevelop and manage the projects. The contract with HMC was executed in May 2004 under the U.S. Department of the Navy's Regional Housing Privatization Initiative.

Scholarships for Military Children program makes money grow on trees this spring

Carrie Williams

DeCA Public Affairs

Mom and Dad were right when they said, "Money doesn't grow on trees," but thanks to the Scholarships for Military Children program, it does for 500 diligent students.

That's figuratively speaking, of course. Yes, it is May and the color green is bursting forth everywhere, but for these students it's not just the "garden variety" chlorophyll green found in the back yard. It's more like Federal Reserve green in the form of \$1,500 to apply toward college tuition this fall.

"We're thrilled to report that the scholarship program is an enormous success in helping military families defray the costs of education," said Defense Commissary Agency Director Maj. Gen. Michael P. Wiedemer. "We're proud to be associated with a program that has awarded more than \$3 million to nearly 2,000 students since its inception in 2001."

Scholarship Managers, a professional scholarship firm, selects the winners based on academic merit, participation in extracurricular and volunteer activities, and the quality of their essays.

Recipients are notified by letter. The full list of scholarship recipients and sponsoring business partners is posted online at: <http://www.militaryscholar.org>.

More than 7,000 applicants "shook the money tree" when they applied to the program last fall for an increase of 500 from the previous year.

According to Edna Hoogewind, DeCA's program liaison, the grade point average of the scholarship recipients is 3.8 – 3.9, and nearly all are members of the National Honor Society, an organization that recognizes students who demonstrate academic excellence, leadership, character and a willingness to serve others.

"These young adults display a level of maturity that's atypical for their age," explained Hoogewind. "It's demonstrated in the many and varied ways they are involved in meaningful activities outside the classroom, and in the creativity and critical thinking they employ in their essays."

The Scholarships for Military Children program is funded by the manufacturers and suppliers that provide support for commissaries worldwide and administered by Fisher House Foundation, a nonprofit organization responsible for building comfort homes near military medical centers.

The foundation bears all costs of the program so that every dollar donated goes for scholarships. The general public has the opportunity to donate to the program through the military scholar Web site.

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Committee moves bills to boost vets benefits

Department of Veterans' Affairs

The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs cleared a package of six bills that would expand and strengthen a number of education, housing, health care, and disability programs for veterans and active duty military personnel earlier this week.

"The legislative package of benefits and services approved represents a significant victory for America's servicemembers and veterans," said Committee Chairman Chris Smith (NJ), sponsor of four of the bills approved.

"These bills would not only help servicemembers in their transition from active duty to civilian jobs and housing, they would also help strengthen VA health care and benefit programs for those veterans that rely on them," he said.

Smith, prime sponsor of H.R. 1716, the 'Veterans Earn and Learn Act', said that, "thousands of servicemembers who signed up for the Montgomery GI Bill program later find that traditional classroom training does not fit their career goals; instead they would rather move directly into the job market. The Veterans Earn and Learn

Act will greatly enhance deserved opportunities for them to take advantage of their GI Bill education benefits when participating in on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs," he said.

"Under H.R. 1716 as approved by the committee today, the GI Bill benefit levels payable to veterans in qualified on-the-job-training (OJT) and apprenticeship programs would be increased by about \$100 per month, boosting the benefit level up to \$837 per month during the first six months of training," Smith said. "In addition, H.R. 1716 would allow VA to make lump sum payments to veterans who complete competency-based OJT and apprenticeship programs early, rather than penalizing them by paying only for time spent in the program. The Veterans Earn and Learn Act would also expand VA's ability to qualify additional competency-based apprenticeship programs for inclusion under the GI Bill program," said Smith.

H.R. 1716 as passed by the committee also contained a number of other substantive provisions concerning disability compensation, pension, housing, and burial benefits, that would:

- Establish a pilot program to furnish on-job

training benefits to claims' adjudicators.

- Require VA, DOD and labor to coordinate so that servicemembers receive credit for OJT and apprenticeships pursued while on duty.

- Codify a VA regulation establishing cancer of the bone, brain, colon, lung and ovary as diseases for which a presumption of service connection is made for a veteran exposed to ionizing radiation.

- Permit certain radiation-exposed veterans who receive payment under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) to be eligible for VA disability compensation.

- Exclude life insurance proceeds from consideration of income for death pension benefits.

- Extend vocational rehabilitation, specially adapted housing, and specially adapted automobile and adaptive equipment benefits to veterans injured in a VA hospital due to negligence, carelessness, or similar reasons.

- Require a report on placement, retention, and advancement of recently separated veterans in private sector employment.

- Increase to 25 percent of the Freddie Mac conforming loan rate (currently \$333,700), and annually index the maximum amount of VA's home loan.

- Extend eligibility for specially adapted housing grants to veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities due to the loss, or loss of use, of both arms above the elbow.

- Make eligible for in-ground burial at Arlington National Cemetery a member or former member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces (and dependents) who at the time of death was under 60 years of age but, for age, would have been eligible for military retired pay, or who dies in the line of duty while on active duty for training or inactive duty training.

- Designate a memorial currently under construction at the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, Calif., as a Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Memorial.

Another bill authored by Chairman Smith, H.R. 4175, the Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2004, as also approved that would increase disability compensation and survivor pensions based upon the Consumer Price Index increase. This legislation would also add osteoporosis to the list of diseases presumed to be service connected for former POWs.

TRICARE offers new claims service

Ellen Maurer

Bureau Of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

The Wisconsin Physicians Service (WPS) is slated to become the new centralized claims processor for all beneficiaries who are eligible for TRICARE For Life (TFL), including those under age 65 and dual-eligible for TRICARE and Medicare.

The change, which is currently being phased in by region, started April 1 and continues through the end of the year. It affects approximately 1.7 million TRICARE For Life beneficiaries in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the American Samoan Islands and the North Mariana Islands.

The new contract integrates the services previously provided by each of the regional managed care support contractors. It will provide a sin-

gle source for claims processing, customer service and administrative claims services.

"The new single claims processing vehicle will deliver customer-friendly service and improve beneficiaries' satisfaction," said Rear Adm. Richard A. Mayo, deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "We will employ commercial best practices and an effective management approach to provide the necessary services through this world-class claims processing system."

For information about current claims processors and to find out what region a beneficiary is in, see www.tricare.osd.mil/main/chart.html.

Once implemented in a region, beneficiaries may call (866) 773-0404 or (866) 773-0405 for information and/or claims processing assistance.

"When services are covered by both Medicare and TFL, and you use a Medicare

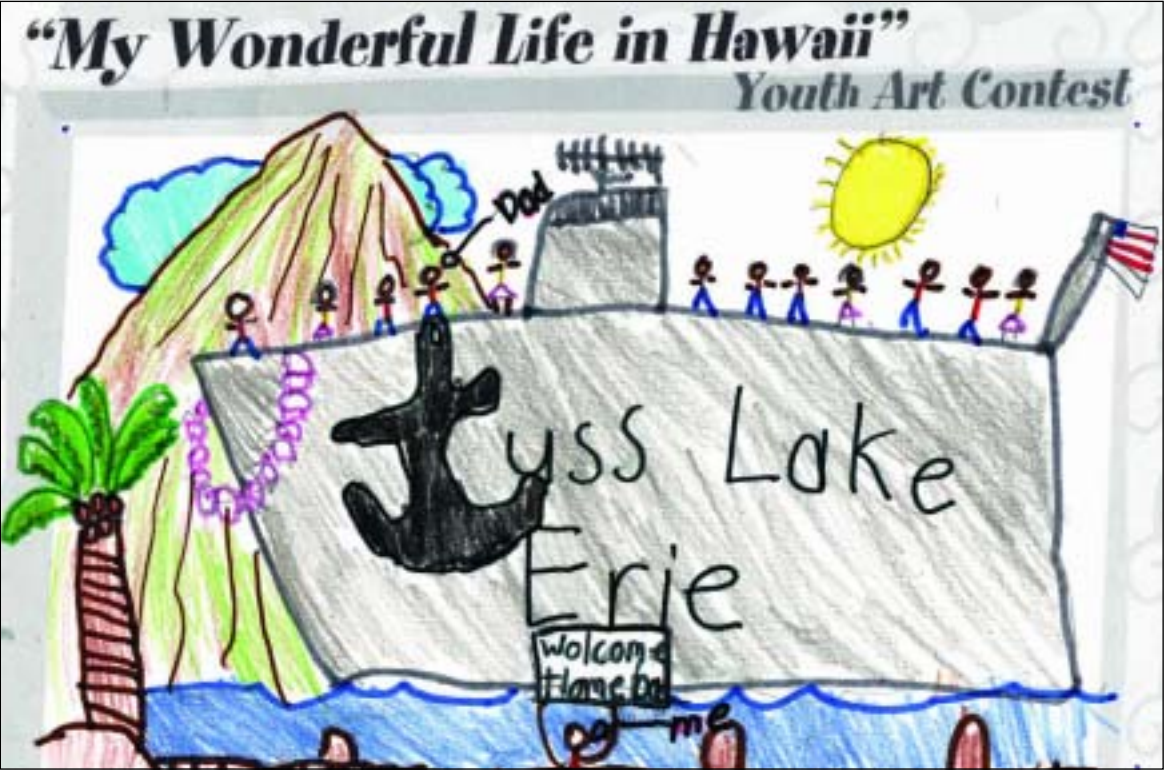
provider, no claims forms are necessary," said Bruce Morris, director of direct care TRICARE system marketing, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. "Both Medicare and TRICARE will pay your health care provider."

The outgoing regional claims processor will continue to process claims for services beneficiaries receive until WPS TFL is implemented in the beneficiary's region, according to Morris.

For more information, go to www.tricare.osd.mil/faqs/default.aspx; under "word search" type in "TRICARE For Life," or under the "advanced search" use the drop down menu, and choose category "TRICARE For Life/Dual eligible," subcategory "All" and select "GO."

Beneficiaries may also access TRICARE For Life information on the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/tfl and on the WPS Web site at www.tricare4u.com.

Winning ‘wonderful life’ entry



The overall prize winner of Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Youth Art Contest was eight-year-old Timmy Frando. "My Great Life in Hawaii" was the theme for the contest.

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